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Farm Security Administration  
Washington, D. C.

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LAND PROMOTION SCHEMES IN THE NEW JERSEY PINE AREA

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 : "Acres of Prosperity"  
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 : "Sunshine and Happiness"  
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 : "The Suburb Beautiful"  
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 :  
 : "The World's Greatest Poultry Center"  
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 : "Health, Wealth, and Happiness"  
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 : "The Road to Ownership, Health, Happi-  
 : ness, and Independence"  
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 : "The Garden Spot of the Garden State"  
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Alvin T. M. Lee

Land Use Planning Section  
Land Utilization Division, Region I  
New Brunswick, New Jersey

in cooperation with

New Jersey State College of Agriculture  
and Experiment Station

October - 1937

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THE NEW JERSEY PINE AREA

Per total tillable farms.

Note: The municipalities of the Pine Area are referred to in the report as the Pine Area margin of the Pine Area.

	Less than 10.0
	10.0 to 19.9
	20.0 or more

Note: The municipalities west of the broken line are referred to in this report as being on the margin of the Pine Area.





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## FOREWORD

Land uses may be classified as uses for (1) production in agriculture, forestry, or industry, or (2) consumption in residence or recreation. One-third of the State of New Jersey, known as the Pine Area, has been primarily devoted to a third category of use. This area, consisting of one and two-thirds million acres of inferior sandy soil, and lying close to many metropolitan centers, has been regarded largely as something to be sold. Thorstein Veblen would have characterized it as a pecuniary or business use.

For close to seventy years, most of the Pine Area has been put to practically no productive or consumptive use. However, such a large proportion of it has been divided and subdivided and sold and resold for all manner of alleged potential uses, until today its ownership pattern is in almost unbelievable confusion. The problems associated with this area involve administrative hardships, social wastes, economic inefficiencies, and personal human misery. These problems are a direct result of the unsound and excessive subdivision of land, yet this sort of business still goes on.

For nearly two years, Dr. A. T. M. Lee, Land Use Planning Specialist for the Farm Security Administration (formerly the Resettlement Administration), has been conducting a systematic study of these problems. By the very nature of the situation, a statistical analysis must be a slow and tedious procedure, yet it is an essential step in attacking the problem. The full study, which, it is hoped, will be completed next year, will comprise three analyses. One part involves a study of a single land promotion scheme cycle from 1888 through the time when 3,500 purchasers were involved up to the present when less than 50 pay taxes. The second part will be a detailed cross-section analysis of the land use problems in ten townships in 1936. The third phase will con-



sist of a more general survey of the land problems in all fifty-eight Pine Area Municipalities.

Because of growing interest in the Pine Area and the time-consuming nature of the quantitative analysis, Dr. Lee presents herewith a brief qualitative outline of the major characteristics and consequences of the problem. Since no quantitative evidence is included in this preliminary report, the statement is conservative and tentative, and no recommendations for action are made.

It is hoped that this preliminary report will help interested persons to visualize the problem more easily, encourage them to consider possible remedial measures; and indicate the direction in which the Land Use Planning study is proceeding. This may be done while the mass of factual data is being put into shape for formal presentation. Any criticisms or comments of this summary or any suggestions for the future development of Dr. Lee's study will be appreciated.

Leonard A. Salter, Jr.  
Acting Chief, Region I  
Land Use Planning Section



### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to acknowledge the assistance received from the following persons:

Harry C. Woodworth, head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, New Hampshire State College of Agriculture, Durham, New Hampshire, who was Chief of the Land Use Planning Section, Region I when this project was initiated. The writer feels that it was through Mr. Woodworth's broad understanding of the objectives of land use planning research that a study of major importance to the welfare of the State is now in progress.

Allen G. Waller, head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, New Jersey State College of Agriculture, New Brunswick, New Jersey, who has given freely of his time and thought for consultation and questions concerning policy. He has also cooperated in making available personnel for clerical assistance.

Leonard A. Salter, Jr., who as Chief of the Land Use Planning Section, Region I has given consultation in regard to this project and is promoting the interests and objectives of Land Use Planning in the Northeast.

The many Local Township and County Officials who have given freely of their time and made available to the writer the official records upon which the project is based.





## LAND PROMOTION SCHEMES IN THE NEW JERSEY PINE AREA

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The Pine Area of New Jersey, which consists of about 1 2/3 million acres, is a wide expanse of relatively level land covering approximately one-third of the area of the State. The soils are predominantly sandy and infertile and, for the most part, are not adapted to profitable commercial agriculture. The natural vegetative growth on the more sandy soils is predominantly pitch pine with an admixture of oak, while on the heavier, well drained soils the ratio is reversed. A large area of about 10,000 acres in southeastern Burlington County and southwestern Ocean County, called the "Plains", has a growth of very scrubby pine and oak with an average height of only a little more than four feet. White cedar is found in the swamps. Large cedar swamps have been cleared and are now used for cranberry production. Cranberry production is the chief single industry of the Pines and about 12,000 acres are used for this purpose.

The topography of the area makes it relatively easy to build passable roads. The only work necessary is to cut the trees and remove the stumps, making a path through the woods. Some of these sand roads become treacherous with much use in dry weather as the sand is worked up into a powdery form, leaving the road without a firm foundation. Most of the more traveled local roads in the Pines have been or are being surfaced with a layer of gravel. This makes a firm road in dry or wet weather. There are several state and county roads passing through the area. These are primarily concrete and macadam and are built not because of the needs of the inhabitants of the Pines, but because of the necessity of providing good roads for the heavy traffic going from Philadelphia and environs to the New Jersey shore.

There is more than an adequate number of railroad lines traversing the Pine Area. The Central Railroad of New Jersey passes through the middle of the Pines from north to south and the Pennsylvania and Reading Railroads own four lines which cross the Pines from east to west.

The population of the inner portion of the Pine Area is very sparse. The majority of the people live in small groups or villages. The families who do live isolated by themselves are usually the ones who own or manage the cranberry enterprise on which they live.

The natives of the Pines engage in occupations associated with the area in which they live. Pulling Sphagnum Moss, picking wild blueberries, and gathering laurel and holly are the chief seasonal occupations engaged in by the natives who depend for their living upon the fruits of the forest. The Sphagnum Moss is pulled from the swamps, dried, baled, and then sold to buyers who in turn sell it to nurserymen and florists who use it for packing. Laurel and holly are sold as decorations for the holiday season.

These natives also occasionally work for wages at cranberry harvesting and the cutting of timber. The subsistence farming which is engaged in is very meager. Very few of the families keep any livestock and some do not have as much as a garden. Almost every native gets his quota of deer during the hunting season.

Many of the people in the Pines have steady jobs throughout the year and have a steady income. Their occupations are: working on the state and county roads, local forest fire warden, postmaster, section hand or foreman on the railroad, and foreman or helper on a cranberry bog. Some of these have their incomes supplemented by holding some local municipal office such as assessor or tax collector.



There are, of course, several "small-farm" communities located in the Pines. Some of these are on the better soils and some on the poorer, depending upon their method of origin. The U. S. Agricultural Census of 1935 shows that there are 2,939 farms in the municipalities which are wholly within the Pines and 5,921 farms in the municipalities on the margin of the Pines.

There is an intensive poultry section between Lakewood and Toms River, a combination poultry and vegetable section around Vineland, and a berry and fruit section around Hammonton. There are also small groups of poultry or vegetable farms scattered throughout the remainder of the southern portion of the Pine Area. Cape May County has an admixture of the general farming type of farms.

In driving through the wide expanse of the Pine lands, one could easily draw the conclusion that most of the area is a state forest or game preserve. This is not true, however. There are five state forests scattered throughout this area and their combined total acreage is only 40,803 acres. A casual observer wonders why such a large expanse of apparently unproductive land remains in private ownership.

This Pine Area of New Jersey has been and is now a haven for people who promote various types of unsound land development schemes. The area is admirable suited for this purpose. There are several factors which make it so:

1. The unproductive nature of the soil and its resultant low value per acre.
2. The ease with which it is possible to penetrate the area with low cost streets and roads.
3. The existing through highway and railway facilities.
4. The ownership of a large portion of the land by absentee owners.
5. The moderate winter climate.

6. The non-exhaustible supply of nearby city people who are willing to make investments on the glowing promises held out by the promoters of fraudulent and unsound land development schemes.

Another important factor is the lack of adequate State laws for the development and settlement of land and for the protection of the public interest. This is responsible for the continuation of the land development schemes which are found in the Pines.

#### TYPES OF LAND DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

There are several types and combinations of types of land development schemes found in the Pine Area of New Jersey. This is due to the varied desires of different human individuals. The promoter has almost always had but one objective in mind, namely to sell the land at a high price. Whatever the peculiar whims of the buyer--recreation, farming, hunting, health resort, or country home, these promoters have always had the exact type of land to meet the needs and whims of the buyer.

The development maps which have been filed with the various county clerks of South Jersey indicate that active land subdivision and development started shortly after the close of the Civil War. There are hundreds of maps on file at the office of each county clerk. The maps show the general layout of the proposed development. The proposed streets are indicated and each plot of ground has a number. No physical characteristic of the land is shown on the map. In many instances the person who purchased land which was plotted on one of these maps found later that it was in a swamp or under water.

#### Small Farms

The Pines have numerous small-farm developments. The most usual size of the farm plots is five acres, but there are many  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1, and 2 acre plots and in some instances there are 10, 15, and 20 acre plots.



Most of Atlantic County has at one time or another been plotted into 5 acre farm plots. There are today several promoters of small farm developments in Atlantic County. The original developments were mapped years ago and have occasionally been revised. Many people have moved out to their small plots and are trying to make a living at poultry or truck farming. The decrepit looking farmsteads attest to the degree of success which these individuals have had. The promoters of these small farm developments stay in the business a long time and obtain a steady income because of the methods used in selling the land. They require only a small down payment and easy monthly installments on the balance. The buyer obtains the deed to his land after the last payment has been made. Many of the buyers become disinterested and decide to stop their monthly payments. The promoter then retains what money has been paid to him and he has no expense in getting the land back because no transfer of title was made. He then sells the piece of land to another buyer who may complete the purchase or may in turn default on his payments.

Medford Farms, a small farm development in Burlington County, was started in 1934 and is being actively promoted at the present time. This is one of the few that has gotten to the stage of active building. About 40 very small dwellings have been built. Some of the inhabitants try their skill at farming these small plots; some use their places merely as summer homes, and others live in their little homes the year round and commute long distances to work.

Most of the small farm developments in the Pines never reach the building stage. They are a great evil, however, even though there is no visible evidence of them. The unsound ones which do reach the building stage become rural slums and cause much hardship to the individuals concerned, as well as causing municipal problems such as an unstable school population and increasing tax delinquency.

The Vineland and Hammonton Areas were small-farm developments. The main portions of these areas are successful because the soil is better than that which is usually found in the general area. The homogeneous groups of people as to nationality, customs, and interests, may also have been a factor attributing to the success of the major portions of these two small-farm communities.

### City

Many phantom cities exist in the Pines. The numerous maps which have been filed indicate that planning is not new. It has existed for many years. There has, however, been a great lack of coordinated planning. It may be that some of the promoters have been sincere in their belief that there was a need for new cities and that there was a justification for promoting them. The great majority of these schemes in the Pines, however, have been nothing more than a scheme to sell land.

No attempt has been made to determine how many of these cities have been planned for the Pines. Pasadena, Roosevelt City, Paisley, Gigantic City, Aberdeen Park, and Chatsworth Estates are only a few of these phantom cities.

One certain development in the center of the Pines was boomed in 1924, and is now on the verge of another boom. It now has a small silk factory employing about 12 persons and the Promoter is in hopes of getting a cigar concern to move into a vacant two story building. This vacant building was occupied by a fountain pen manufacturer during the city's first boom. His firm is now defunct. There are seven dwellings, some of which are occupied, located on a few of the would-be streets. The surroundings make them appear as though they were dropped down into the brush from a passing aeroplane.

Paisley is being studied as part of the land use planning project in New Jersey. About 3,500 individuals were associated with the



ownership of lots in this development. There were, at one time, 11 houses and one factory in Paisley. The factory was never operated. Most of the houses changed hands frequently until they either burned or were sold for lumber. Only two houses now remain--one is used as a club house during the deer season and the other has just become vacant due to the death of the lone last resident, an 87 year old lady who, with her husband, moved to the place in 1889. They were among the first to buy land in this development.

Aberdeen Park did not get far beyond the paper stage. This development was discovered by the writer in a search for the deeds to the property assessed to the various owners of lots in Paisley. Some of the people who owned lots in Aberdeen Park were assessed with the Paisley group and had for years paid taxes to Tabernacle Township, whereas their property was located in Washington Township and about 15 miles away from Paisley. Three individuals are still paying their taxes to Tabernacle Township, the others having been dropped from the records because of tax delinquency.

#### Recreational

There are two successful lake developments in the Pines--Browns Mills and Medford Lakes. Lakewood is a high class winter resort and is a going concern. There are dozens of others which are only partially successful or a complete failure. Most of them have been nothing more than schemes to sell land.

The summer cottage developments along the bays and inlets of the New Jersey coast are apparently ill planned and too extensive. The problems which they create are similar to those created by the developments within the Pine Area. They will not be discussed here, however, as they are not an essential part of the Pine Area problem.



### PROMOTIONAL METHODS

The selling technique used by some of the promoters of land schemes in the Pines indicate that they have had considerable knowledge of human psychology and have known how to create a demand where none existed before.

#### Advertising

Newspaper advertising has probably been the most successful method of reaching a large number of people who would succumb to the glowing promises held out by the promoter. Some of the promoters advertise rather sporadically, while others run their advertisements in serial form. The earlier promoters had lengthy advertisements and conveyed most of their glowing promises through this medium. In later years, most of the newspaper advertisements were very brief and plain, and the circulars which were sent out to the inquirers contained the data and pictures setting forth the splendid qualities and possibilities of buying land and moving out to the new development. A portion of the advertisements concerning the Paisley development referred to above have been reviewed. This promoter advertised each Sunday for more than a year. In his advertisements, he told of the rapid progress of the development; how several business concerns had contracted for sites for grocery stores, factories, sanitariums, railroad car stables, and various other types of establishments.

#### Field Personnel

Field personnel is said to have been used to a considerable extent in selling lots and farm plots in the various land schemes. The agent received a commission and he would use his own methods in disposing of land.

### Excursions

Taking the prospective buyers on excursions to the proposed development has been one of the regular steps in the sale's program set up by the promoters. Prospective buyers are brought out by train or bus. They are shown what little there is to see of the development and most important of all, they are shown the prospectus of the development as it is to be in the future when completed. The excursions conducted by the promoter of Paisley were accompanied by a band. They had music and gayety on the train as well as out on the grounds of the development. The prospective buyers were also given a free picnic lunch and very likely a pep talk as to the future of the development.

### Giving Away Lots

In order to get a development started, many of the promoters have given away lots, charging a fee for the transfer of title and the recording of the deed. As the sales program got under way, the price was progressively increased. This progressive increase in the price gave them a selling point because they could then show how the lots were increasing in value and what the percentage profits were which were made by the first purchasers..

### WHO ARE THE PROMOTERS?

In almost every instance the promoters of these land schemes are residents of New York City or Philadelphia. A few of the promoters have owned their land for some time, but by far the greater proportion go out and buy cheap land for the schemes which they have in mind.

The central office is always in a large city where the promoter expects to find the prospective buyers. It seems that it is very important to communicate directly with the prospective buyer. The buyer can be induced to buy if he sees the proposed plan. The seller can then

make any promise necessary. An individual after reading an advertisement about a proposed development would never buy if he had to drive out to the development to make his purchase.

### RESULTS OF UNSOUND LAND PROMOTION SCHEMES

The measure of success achieved by these land development schemes depends upon the point of view by which their success is measured. The degree to which they are good or bad depends upon how far reaching they are as to the number of people involved and how long a time they continue to exist.

#### To the Promoter

Many of the promoters operate land schemes as a side-line to their main business. They buy the land at a low price and sell at a high price and have relatively small cash expenditures in connection with the land scheme. The promoter's personal income is, therefore, enhanced and from his point of view the scheme is a success.

The promoters who have carried out the most extensive schemes have spent their entire time at it. They have also had large expenditures for personnel and the transportation of prospective buyers. Those who have been sincere but have worked against natural conditions have also had large expenditures for clearing the land, bringing in certain public service facilities, and other items for the improvement of the development. It may be that in the long run some of these promoters would have made a larger personal income if they had been occupied by some enterprise which was not inimical to the public welfare. There are records, however, showing how the promoter abandoned the promotion scheme and let the remainder of the land revert to the township or become "no-man's land" as soon as it became unprofitable to him.



### To the Local Municipality

The problems which these schemes leave in their wake are extremely bad for the local municipality. At first thought the local people rejoice because of the added assessed values which are placed upon the assessment rolls. This they expect to bring in larger tax receipts and later result in a lower tax rate for them. More people, they think, will move in to share their tax burden. In the past, the local assessor and tax collector must have rejoiced because they were paid a certain fee for each name on the assessment roll.

The results, however, have not been so happy. Most of the purchasers of the lots and farm plots realized very soon that they had been "taken in" and that the property which they had purchased was worthless. They decided to abandon the property at once and did not pay any taxes. Others came to the same conclusion in a year or two, and throughout the following years additional people decided to abandon their worthless land and not pay any more taxes.

### False Tax Base

Such a situation has resulted in the building up of a false tax base. For instance, in 1891 the total assessed valuation in Paisley was \$79,100.00, while taxes were paid on only \$37,790.00. A total of \$713.00 was collected from the Paisley property owners. The state and county tax rate in Burlington County in that year was \$0.97 per \$100.00 assessed valuation, which meant that Woodland Township had to pay out \$767.00 on the total Paisley assessment to the State and County. The amount paid out was, therefore, \$54.00 more than the collections. In addition to this loss, the township had an increased expenditure for assessment and tax collection fees.

### Municipal Indebtedness

This false tax base situation has existed in most of the Pine Area townships and is the primary cause of the indebted condition of these townships. The law requires that the state and county taxes be paid first. If the township budget is based on a false tax base, it works to the disadvantage of the township. They have found it necessary to borrow money to meet their school and other local expenses.

### Excessive School Costs

The developments which are settled suddenly bring about a temporary congested condition in the local schools and the cost of sending the high school pupils to neighboring municipalities exceeds the tax receipts paid by the new settlers. A settlement which is unsound usually becomes partially or totally depopulated in a few years. If the local schools have been enlarged, the municipality then has an excess investment in schools. Tabernacle Township is having such a problem at the present time.

### Confused Pattern of Land Ownership

The continual abandonment of what the owners have found to be worthless land results in a very confused pattern of land ownership in the township. In order to eliminate the false tax base, many of the townships omit the names of the delinquent lot and farm plot owners from the assessment roll. According to the law, a tax sale should be held on this delinquent property and the township, which is the only bidder on such land, then becomes the owner. The township should then continue to pay state and county taxes on this land. They have a more practical solution, however, in merely omitting the names from the assessment books, thereby making the delinquent property "no-man's land".

There are many developments in the Pines where some of the original buyers of lots are still paying taxes; some of the lots and farm



plots have become "no-man's land" as stated above and some of the parcels have been purchased at tax sale by one or more individuals. These latter individuals then take actual possession of the entire tract. The streets which were cut out are overgrown with brush and as a result no owner can find the location of his or her lot. This is indeed a confused pattern of land ownership.

#### To the State

It is difficult for the State to carry out a constructive program of land development and conservation when the ownership pattern of the land is such as to make it difficult to acquire large contiguous tracts of land.

#### Speculative Value on Land

The promotional schemes have also placed a speculative value on the land, thereby making it very expensive to carry out a public purchase program. Many of the owners who live in the large cities think their pine land should be worth about as much as valuable city lots.

#### Difficult to Obtain Clear Title to Land

If the State were to carry out a public purchase program, special laws would have to be enacted to take care of the large amount of "no-man's land" which exists in the Pines. It is impossible to locate the owners who have abandoned their pine land. Very often, years after the last tax payment was made, an heir will find the deed to the abandoned property and write to the local officials to find out the status of the land which he thinks rightfully belongs to him.

It would be a long tedious process to bring about a sane pattern of land ownership. If any of the land should become valuable through some unforeseen discovery, there would be an unparalleled scramble by people who would want to claim ownership to the land.

### To the Individuals Concerned

The individuals who are gullible enough to buy worthless property, accepting the glowing promises of unscrupulous promoters and salesmen as the only index of its value, should rightfully be given last consideration in correcting the many evils resulting from the unsound land development schemes.

### Number of People Involved

No statistics are available as to the number of people involved in the many land schemes which have been promoted in the Pines, but it would not be surprising to find that upwards of one million people have been directly involved. There is no way of determining the exact number as the records are not complete. Many individuals who completed payment on their property have not had their deeds recorded. Many made only partial payments and then decided the property was worthless and abandoned it. The financial losses suffered by individuals range from a few dollars to several thousands. In the Paisley development, one man paid \$1,700.00 for lots; another paid \$1,500.00; and a few others, of which the records are complete, paid about \$1,000.00. The annual tax payments which were made added to the financial loss of the individual.

### Cost of Legal Advice

There is no way of determining the amount of money paid out for legal advice sought by the individuals who want to find out the status of their pine lots. The number of letters which the local officials have received from lawyers indicates that a sizable sum of money is paid out for this purpose.

### Stranded Population

People may lose money in fraudulent land schemes in the Pines, but this should not be so disturbing because people lose money in almost



every other type of enterprise. The problem which is serious to the individual, however, is the one of stranded population. A man who has invested his savings in worthless land, spent years of his time in trying to make a living from that land, subjected his family to a low standard of living, and gotten himself into a situation where it is almost impossible for him to start anew has indeed suffered a great financial, social, and spiritual loss. Such a loss is an absolute loss because the scientific knowledge at hand would indicate that the chances of making a living at agricultural pursuits from the infertile pine area soils is next to nil. Special enterprises such as cranberry and blueberry growing are of course specialties and adapted to certain types of this sandy soil. The individuals who are victims of land promotional schemes, however, usually do not have the capital nor the knowledge and experience necessary for the growing of these crops.

Many of the land scheme victims try their hand at poultry raising. Commercial poultry raising on a scale large enough to provide the family with a comfortable living requires capital and experience. A large majority of these people, therefore, fail at this enterprise. Many a promoter of land schemes in New Jersey has used the hen as bait for getting people to buy small farm plots at high prices. "Five hundred laying hens will net you \$1,000.00 yearly" is the claim of the promoter of Medford Farms. "Profits and pleasure in poultry" is the slogan of another. On the same page there are pictures of several breeds of poultry, a happy child holding an egg, a hen house and also a statistical table showing that a net profit of \$0.74 can be made on two pound broilers.

#### STATE REGULATION

Most of the plans of the land development schemes have been filed at the county clerk's office in the county in which the development is located. It is required that the township committee approve the plan

before it is filed. This approval has been more routine, however, as the township committee has, in most cases, had no basis for determining whether or not the development would or would not be desirable. The State Planning Board in its second annual report has shown that the excessive subdivision of land has been and is a serious problem also in the metropolitan areas of the State.

#### Present State Laws

There are adequate laws on the New Jersey Statute books to control any future development providing the local municipalities avail themselves of the protection which these laws afford. The local people, however, have to be educated as to the existence of such laws and what these laws make it possible for them to do. These laws make it possible to control the laying out of new developments, but they are inadequate to cope with the present existing situation.

#### Zoning Enabling Act - chapter 274 (Public Laws of 1928)

"An Act to enable municipalities to adopt zoning ordinances limiting and restricting to specified districts and regulating therein buildings and structures, according to their construction, and the nature and extent of their use, and the repeal of sundry zoning laws."

This act provides that, "Any municipality of this State may, by a zoning ordinance, limit and restrict to specified districts and may regulate therein, buildings and structures according to their construction, and the nature and extent of their use."

"The authority conferred by this act shall include the right to regulate and restrict the height, number of stories, and sizes of buildings, and other structures, the percentage of lot that may be occupied, the size of yards, courts and other open spaces, the density of population, and the location and use and extent of use of buildings and structures for trade, industry, residence, or other purposes."



Comments

This law is intended for urban areas, to make it possible to have orderly, homogeneous and beneficial building development within the corporate limits of the municipality. It makes it possible to set aside certain areas for particular uses. Industries can be grouped in one or more general areas, business sections in certain areas, and residential sections in others. It also makes it possible to set aside certain areas for recreational purposes.

The orderly development of an urban area and the prevention of the encroachment of industrial, business, and residential areas upon one another makes the entire municipality a more desirable place in which to live. It also prevents the destruction of real estate values due to the infiltration of undesirable uses of land and buildings into areas which are predominantly recreational or residential.

This law also makes it possible to control the density of population, type of building to be erected, percentage of lot to be occupied and other factors which would be in harmony with the public interest.

It can readily be seen that this law was not intended and does not apply to a situation such as is found in the Pines.

Municipal Planning Act - chapter 235 (Public Laws of 1930)

"An Act enabling municipalities other than counties to authorize the preparation, adoption, regulation, and enforcement of master plans, official maps and subdivision plots for municipal planning purposes; and to appoint boards with specified powers and duties; and providing penalties for violation of this act and repealing sundry planning laws."

"It shall be the function and duty of the planning board to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the Board's judgment, bear essential relation to the planning of such munici-

pality. Such plan, with the accompanying maps, charts, drawings, and descriptive matter, shall show the Board's recommendations for the development of said territory, including, among other things the general location, character and extent of streets, subways, bridges, waterways, water fronts, parkways, playgrounds, squares, parks, aviation fields, and other ways, grounds and open spaces, the general location of public buildings and other public property, and the general location and extent of major public utility and terminal facilities, whether publicly or privately owned, also general plans for the removal, re-location, widening, narrowing, vacating, abandonment, change of use or extension of any of the foregoing ways, grounds, open spaces, buildings, property, utilities or terminals."

"Whenever the planning board shall have adopted the master plan, or any part thereof, no street, square, park or public way, ground or open space, or public building or structure, or major public utility, whether publicly or privately owned, shall be constructed or authorized in the municipality, or in such part thereof as is shown in said master plan as adopted, until the location, character and extent thereof has been submitted to the planning board for approval."

"No plot of a subdivision of land showing a new street or highway shall be accepted for filing by the county clerk or register of deeds, wherever such office exists in any of the several counties of this State, until it has been approved by the planning board, if it has been empowered to approve such plots, or by the municipal governing body, and such approval be endorsed in writing on the plot in such manner as the planning board or governing body may designate. After such plot is approved and filed, the streets, highways, parkways, playgrounds and parks shown



on such plot shall be and become a part of the official map and master plan of the municipality."

There is provided a penalty of \$100.00 for each lot or parcel of land sold "by reference to or exhibition of or by other use of a plot or a subdivision, before such plot has been approved by the planning board and duly recorded or filed in the office of the county clerk or register of deeds, if any, of the county where said plot is located."

#### Comments

Taking advantage of this law would make it possible for the municipalities in the Pines to control the development of new areas in the future. They could create a planning board and adopt master plans for the development of the municipality. They would have the power to pass on any new subdivision of land and could prevent any new subdivision from taking place if it did not conform with the general provisions of their master plan.

It would probably be a most difficult task, however, to apply the provisions of this law in the rural municipalities of the Pines. The existing subdivision plans are so numerous, the pattern of land ownership so complex and confused, and the number of problems already existing so great that the adoption of the provisions of this law would probably add to the confusion rather than be a correction of the situation. Most of the area within the Pines has already been invaded by promoters of land schemes. The new areas which could be benefited by the provisions of this act are, therefore, very few.

This law delegates the power of making and the adoption of master plans to the local municipalities. The problems which exist in the Pines are area-wide and are more or less common to more than fifty municipi-



palities. It is, therefore, inconceivable that all of the municipalities would take advantage of the provisions of this act or that the governing body in each of the municipalities would understand the broader aspects of the entire problem as it affects the welfare of the State as a whole.

County Planning Act - chapter 251 (Public Laws of 1935)

"An Act providing for county and regional planning and the creation, organization, and powers of county and regional planning boards."

"It shall be the function and duty of a county planning board to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the county. The master plan of a county, with the accompanying maps, plots, charts, and descriptive and explanatory matter, shall show the county planning board's recommendations for the development of the territory covered by the plan, and may include, among other things, the general location, character and extent of streets or roads, viaducts, bridges, waterway and water front developments, parkways, playgrounds, forests, reservations, parks, airports, and other public ways, grounds places, and spaces; the general location and extent of forests, agricultural areas, and open development areas for purposes of conservation, food and water supply, sanitary and drainage facilities, or the protection of urban development, and such other features as may be important to the development of the county."

Comments

The county planning boards created under this act would be interested primarily in the development of a public works program within the county. The board would have no control over the subdivision of land in any municipality in which there was no municipal planning board.

The creation of regional planning boards under this act would make it possible for two or more governmental units to do their planning cooperatively. As stated in the comments under the Municipal Planning



Act, it is not conceivable that more than fifty municipalities would act in accord on a problem which is common to the entire area.

Inadequacy of Present Laws

The three laws described above are intended primarily for urban communities and for the development of a public works program in municipalities and counties. They make possible control of future development but are not intended to correct such evils as are found in the Pines and are, therefore, not adequate for this purpose. Any municipality in the Pines could probably create a planning board and adopt master plans for the future control of various land schemes, but it would not correct the problems which have already been created.

The problems of tax delinquency, improper use of land, fraudulent and unsound land development schemes, stranded people and a confused pattern of land ownership are all too complex to be properly handled by local authorities. These problems are area-wide and State-wide and effect the welfare of all the people of the State as well as those in the metropolitan areas of New York City and Philadelphia. In order to correct the situation which exists in the Pines it is, therefore, necessary to adopt a State policy and enact State laws which will attack the problems at their source. The local authorities should work in cooperation with State authorities but any policy which is adopted should be area-wide or State-wide.

Special laws and a series of them will have to be enacted to properly correct the land use problems here discussed. No detailed recommendations will be made at this time however, but will await the completion of further research.



